8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

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8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

RITUAL FESTIVALS AND SOCIAL COHESION IN THE HINTERLAND OF THE GOLD COAST

By M. FORTES

621 SOCIAL cohesion, or some equivalent concept, has gained an honorable place in anthropological literature as a labor saving-device. To an ethnographer working with an Australian horde, a nomadic Beduin tribe, or even a people with a strong centralized government, it may seem a self-evident concept; a first law of social life like Newton's first law of motion, by which everything else can be explained. In the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, however, there is nothing self-evident about it. In the limited area north of the White Volta and east of 1°W. long. we find a congeries of peoples speaking different dialects of the Mossi-Dagomba language family with an ostensibly uniform culture, but lacking a centralized political organization. There are no villages in this country, but for miles and miles, continuously, one mud compound follows on another. There is often nothing to mark the boundary between one settlement and another, nor can exact frontiers between dialect areas be established. A short ethnographic residence in the country shows that a notion of a fixed and demarcated tribal unit, either as a linguistic grouping or as a political grouping owing a common allegiance, does not exist. There seems, in fact, to be no structural unit larger than the clan-settlement capable of exhibiting social cohesion.

The observations presented here[1] refer to the small corner of this area occupied by the Tale settlements. The Tallensi are well-known to their neighbors for the ritual festivals which they celebrate. These festivals occur between the cessation of the rainy season in September and the commencement of the next rainy season in April. In this paper I shall deal only with a single facet of the festivals, their significance as a mechanism of social cohesion. To appreciate this, some knowledge, however over-simplified, of Tale social and political structure is necessary.

The Tallensi, being anciently settled agriculturalists, are inexorably bound to place. Local group and kinship group tend to be coterminous, hence the social classification of people is primarily in terms of the settlements. Intra-clan social relationships are of a uniform type all over the country. Relations between settlements, that is political relations, however, are of a different order. In keeping with the dominant trend of Tale social life towards decentralization and divergence, rather than centralization

[1] The present paper is based on material collected during a field expedition carried out in 1934–35 under the auspices of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures.

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

and convergence, every clan puts an egocentric interpretation upon its relations with other clans. These interpretations are compounded of prejudice, conventional opinions, traditional attitudes, and personal values; but they conform to a pattern nevertheless. Lacking a central machinery of government and a common allegiance, the Tale settlements have no permanent political relations with one another. Even the Administration has been able to impose only a limited and superficial degree of coördination. Traditionally and to this day the heads of clans coöperate in certain contingencies or in certain periodically recurrent ritual situations only. For the rest local autonomy is absolute. The upshot is that the political relations of the Tallensi are a sum of the political relations of each settlement with its neighbors. This means first, that geography is an important factor in their politics, and second, that rigid political frontiers do not exist.

A glance at the political geography of the clans with which the present paper is mainly concerned is therefore essential.

These Tale settlements fall into two major groups. On the one hand are the clans known as the Namoos, on the other the Tallis clans. The principal settlement of the Namoos is at Tongo, which was founded, according to the tradition stereotyped throughout Taleland, by Mosur, who fled thither from the Mampuru country in the south, probably over two centuries ago. Mosur was the ancestor of all the people of Tongo and of several settlements colonized from there. Later immigrants from Mampuru established co-clans of Tongo.

The Tallis (i.e. the "real Tallensi") can be subdivided into two groups, those living north of Tongo, the principal settlement of whom is at Baari; and those living on and around the Tong Hills, whom I call the Hill Tallis. The Gbizug lineage is in a special category, as we shall see. Tallis traditions attribute diverse origins to their clans. Four clans, including Baari, Gbizug, and Wakyi, claim primacy of rank in virtue of the fact that their ancestors emerged from the earth or descended from heaven, and were there when Mosur arrived. The other clans are offshoots of these, or of immigrant origin. The Tallis have an ingenious system of clan concatenation, based on a fiction of kinship. Broadly speaking, every lineage of every clan is linked to a lineage of every neighboring Tallis clan by a fiction of half-brotherhood which binds them to reciprocity of certain privileges and obligations, prohibits intermarriage, and especially unites them in a common religious cult. The Namoos clans conform in all respects to the classical definition of a clan; the others must be designated thus for brevity's sake and for want of a term which will convey how they deviate from the prototype.

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

184 Namoos and Tallis have a common cultural idiom, just as they have a single language. Their economic system is uniform and inclusive of both communities; their laws of land tenure, of inheritance and successions, of marriage and legitimacy are identical. The ritual practices and the mystical notions of their religious and magical institutions are the same in form and dynamical character, even if they sometimes differ in content, especially in the domestic cult of the ancestors. This common corpus of social definitions and of pragmatic organization is the inevitable correlate of the conditions of social and economic intercourse normally prevailing between the two communities. They have been intermarrying for generations, and this entails common legal techniques and principles, as well as a single type of domestic organization. They exchange commodities in trade, gifts, and in the discharge of kinship obligations: for every Namoo has numerous cognatic kinsmen among the Tallis and the Tallis among the Namoos. Kindred come into frequent contact with one another, not only on ritual occasions, such as sacrifices to ancestors and in funeral ceremonies, but also in ordinary social and personal affairs.

621 622 793 Upon this homogenous basis of social and economic relations between individuals and familial groupings is superposed a political structure the essential principle of which is a polar opposition defined and emphasized by the most stringent ritual observances. The head of the Tongo Namoos has the title Naa or Chief. The chieftanship (naam) was brought to Tongo by its founder, Mosur, from Mampurugu. It remains the absolute prerogative of his descendants. Every new chief of Tongo buys his rank from an hereditary elector who represents the chief of Mampurugu. The colonies and co-clans of Tongo elect chiefs of lesser grade. But no Tallis may hold the title Naa. Their heads of clans and lineages are typically entitled Tendaana, (literally "owner of the land"). The principal Tendaanaships in the land are attained by rights of patrilineal succession. The chief of Tongo claims suzerainty over all the Tale settlements. Actually his executive authority reaches only to his own settlement, while a Tendaana's executive authority hardly extends beyond his own lineage. Balancing the chiefs' political claims, the Tendaanas assert their precedence in virtue of their "ownership of the land." Moreover, each of the principal Tendaanas claims precedence over all the others, such is the degree of local autonomy. Normally an occasion never arises where these rival claims can be pitted against one another. They are vaunted in the presence of the ethnologist, or in the ritual and domestic assemblies of kinsfolk.

784 184 Chief and Tendaana, Namoos and Tallis, are further separated by a barrier of taboos, many of them symbolic. The chief may not tread upon

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

the earth with his bare foot; he may not pluck a blade of grass or engage in agriculture, and so on. Tendaanas observe none of these taboos. They again may not wear any cloth garment, but only skins, for a white gown of cloth is put upon the chief at his investiture. Cloth garments, horses, guns, are traditionally tabooed to all Tallis, since they were characteristic of the Namoos. Chief and Tendaana regard these taboos as of the very substance of their respective offices, as moral obligations to their respective communities. So also property lost on the land or stray animals must be handed over to a Tendaana on pain of supernaturally inflicted death. But stray cows, dogs, or vagrant humans go to the chief. Most important of all, the religious practices of the Tallis are dominated by the cult of the earth shrines (tɔŋbana)—sacred groves, streams, pools, etc.—to which the Namoos as a group have no access.

The polarity thus institutionally registered is paralleled by standardized political attitudes. In the sporadic fights of pre-European days Tallis and Namoos were traditional enemies. This is not only recollected in tales but vividly expressed in the military pantomine which accompanies every funeral ceremony. Tallis at their funerals fling taunts and challenges at the Namoos, and the latter retaliate at their funerals. When his patriotism is aroused, a member of one group will speak of the other group superciliously or derogatorily, forgetting for the moment, perhaps, that they are his own mother's kinsmen.

Between Chief and Tendaana, between Namoos and Tallis, there are barriers, but not a gulf, an equilibrium and not an irreconciliable disjunction. The fulcrum of this equilibrium is the Tendaana of the Gbizug lineage. Geographically placed between the Namoos and the Tallis, he is the ritual and political mediator between them. The principal Tendaana of Baari can directly approach the Chief of Tongo; but the Tendaanas of the Hill Tallis or of non-Tale clans can only approach the Chief through the Gbizug Tendaana. In the old days it was he who made peace between the traditional enemies after a fight. A ritual and social equilibrium of high tension exists between Gbizug and Tongo, symbolized in the peculiar relations of the Tendaana and the Chief. Tradition, distorted by each side to its own aggrandizement, relates that it was the first Gbizug Tendaana who received and gave land to settle on to the ancestor of the Tongo Namoos. The final and most solemn of the rites by which a new chief of Tongo is inducted, rites which will be referred to again, must be carried out by the Gbizug Tendaana. Upon him rests the responsibility and the privilege of making the sacrifices for the most sacrosanct fetish of the Tongo Chieftainship, that which safeguards the life and well-being of the Chief and thus

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

793 622 [789] the prosperity of the land. Though it is housed in his compound, neither the Chief nor any of his clansmen may set eyes on it; only the Gbizug Tendaana and his lineage may. The Chief speaks of it with an awe which is almost terror. The balance is adjusted by the Chief's rainmaking powers. Only Namoos may own rain medicine, which was brought to Taleland by their ancestor. When drought is prolonged, all the Tendaanas, led by the Gbizug Tendaana, formally call upon and implore the Chief to see to it that rain falls. So great is his rainmaking power that rain will fall at once if he merely declares, in the name of his ancestors, that their wishes will be satisfied. Such, in fact, proved to be the case in 1934.

Again, this ritual polarity is paralleled in social and personal attitudes. The Chief and the Gbizug Tendaana, in private conversation, comment with a mixture of pride, scorn, and fear each upon his opposite number.

796 Among the most striking mechanisms of this equilibrium are the ritual festivals. The various settlements are always classified in terms of them, and the natives never tire of dilating enthusiastically upon them.

Ritual and dance are the two components of every festival; the former usually esoteric, the latter public though exclusive. During the rainy season, which lasts roughly from April to September, ritual and group activities are almost completely ousted by agriculture. In July-August the early millet is harvested, but the major crops, the guinea corn and late millet, [805] still stand.[2] The Tallensi have a lunar calendar, and the last month of the rains is called the "Moon of Waters" (Kuom ŋmarig). An ethnologist cannot, alas, be in two places at the same time. I was living among the Namoos in September, 1934, and shall therefore describe the events of this and the next month from their point of view.

Weeks in advance the approaching festivals are the dominant theme of conversation for man, woman, and child. The ceremonial cycle is inaugurated by the Baari Tendaana, who ritually "throws away the water," i.e. abolishes the rains on the first day of the new month. This is announced by a burst of hallooing, which commences at Baari and sweeps across the country, the signal that the festivals have come round again.

That night the people of Baari begin their celebrations. At Tongo, on the next day, the youths and maidens are putting finishing touches to their festive costumes. On the fourth day of the moon a deputation of elders waits on the Chief, to remind him of his traditional obligation to summon a diviner on the following day.

[2] The calendrical incidence of the ritual festivals and their relation to the annual productive cycle are more fully set out in M. and S. L. Fortes, Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi (Africa, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1936).

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

From this divination emerges, first, whom the ancestor spirits have selected to bring the sacred Gingauŋ drum, after which the Namoos' festival is named, out of the Chief's court chamber. There are two Gingauŋ drums: a small one, the sacred one brought by their ancestor Mosur, and a large one, subsequently manufactured merely to add liveliness to the dance. Second, the seance establishes what sacrifices have to be made upon the shrines of the original ancestors of Tongo. In this seance the Chief and his elders, the representatives, metaphorically speaking, of the clan conscience, show how vividly the hallowing of the tradition is felt by them. The sacrifices have a double intention; to thank the ancestors for a successful harvest of early millet and for the standing crop of guinea corn, and to avert quarrels and disputes which might occur when great concourses of people flock to the dance. It is for fear of quarrels which might lead to bloodshed and thus to unknown supernatural calamities that only a youth authorized by the ancestor spirits may inaugurate the dance. The divination, as befits the joyful occasion, is nevertheless cheerful.

The sacrifices are carried out immediately, and ritual then sinks into abeyance for a time. The nightly dance occupies the center of social interest, until the moon begins to wane. For a night or two the children have almost complete possession of the dedicated dancing field, practicing their awkward steps. With the waxing moon adults throng to the dance, until in the end even young mothers come out carrying sleepy infants, and the drummers cannot be seen in the center of the great mass of poeple.

This first phase is aptly known as the Gingauŋdeema, "play Gingauŋ." It is monopolized by the younger adults and adolescents, who try out the dancing songs. But the season gets its name mainly from the sexual effervescence associated with it. Women are the cause of the disputes which threaten the peace of the dance. Not a day passes without an elopement, planned on the dancing ground. Unfortunately, few of these marriages survive the festive period; and that, perhaps explains why there is a taboo against carrying out any of the legal formalities of marriage during this month. For Baari and Tongo, the Moon of Waters is a dangerous month, in spite of the festivity, because of the human passions aroused, as is evident from the fact that it is a grave sin to shed blood on the earth, even from a scratch or cut. Strangers, and in particular Tallis, flock to watch the dance, and of course to find lovers. But only Namoos may enter the dance.

A fortnight's lull ensues during which the guinea-corn is harvested. Then comes the Moon of Daa, so named from the final phase of the festival, and the "real Gingauŋ," Gingauŋ maŋa. But I must resist the tempta-

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

tion to enter into an acount of the dynamics of the dance itself. It is the first Gingaun incomparably enhanced. The older men, expert dancers, are in charge, though the younger ones and even women and children have full freedom to join.

A point of psychological interest is the choral refrain which provides the organizing slogan for the dance. It consists of a verse taunting a member of a co-clan of Tongo with some moral failing. To taunt the Tallis thus would be tantamount to declaring war.

The festival reaches a climax in the second week of the moon, when it squeezes out every other social activity. In the dance this is marked by a striking bit of pantomime which symbolizes the pride of the Namoos in their chieftainship and chiefly ancestors. Suddenly, long after midnight, when the moon is at its highest and the dance at a pitch of intensity, a dozen solemn figures begin to press slowly towards the center of the dance. Spectators and dancers make way for them. They stand in rank, shoulder to shoulder, unlike the dancers who form a file. The dancers shuffle, leap and stamp, but they bob gravely from foot to foot, erect, faces set like masks, chanting a low, wordless chant. They wear faded red caps and gorgeous, though sometimes tarnished, gowns—the garb of chiefs—and carry spears. They represent their grandfathers and ancestors who had been chiefs and men of rank. The natives delight both in the dramatic contrast, and in identifying the chiefs whom the mummers represent.

And now ritual returns. On the fifteenth night there is no dancing. On the contrary, not a single person stirs out of doors after dark. For that night all the ancestors of Tongo come to dance Gingaun, and he who hears or sees the phantom dance dies at once. Everybody hangs out his or her finest garments for the ancestors to borrow for their dance—spiritually, of course. For they keep a sharp look-out against human thieves, who have been known not to respect the occasion. Next day, towards noon, the Baari Tendaana calls upon the Chief of Tongo, bringing a small pot of consecrated beer. All present must drink of it, and the ancestors too, for a gourd-full is sent out to be poured on the grave of Mosur. It is a convivial scene, which instantly becomes serious as the Chief begins to address the Tendaana. This is the gist of his speech: The day has returned for us to meet as our ancestors used to, and to do as they did so that we shall have untroubled sleep, marry new wives, and beget many children. We have had a good harvest. May we all live to see Golib and sow our millet in that moon successfully. May my chiefly ancestors and Mosur permit this and permit us to gain new life so that next year at this time we again celebrate Daa. The Tendaana responds with a similar blessing, saying that Baat

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

Daa (the supreme bo[illegible]ri people) and Mosur will jointly pros- 796
per the land. Then he [illegible]hat day Baari celebrates Daa.

That same evening the [illegible]e Gingaun drum is escorted to Baari by the 796
Gbizug Tendaana and the Wakyi Tendaana, following a ritual path. All
Tongo flocks to Baari to dance with great enthusiasm on a traditional spot 535
outside the grove of Baat Daa. Near the dance, but silently aloof, wait the Gbizug and Wakyi Tendaanas. A few hundred yards away, as if indifferent to the dance, young men of Baari assemble, wearing their ritual garb, a goatskin. When the Baari Tendaana and his ritual coadjutors arrive to join them, the Gbizug and Wakyi Tendaanas are summoned. Greetings are exchanged, and then led by the Baari Tendaana, the whole company files away in a most solemn and silent procession, brought up by the youngest members carrying pots of consecrated beer. With utter gravity this procession thrice encircles the dancers who continue to dance as if oblivious to this. Anyone who dares to break through the encircling pro- [784]
cession is doomed to a supernatural death. The procession files away again, into the sacred grove. There the Tendaanas pour libations of beer to Baat Daa, calling down the very same blessings as had been invoked by the Chief earlier in the day. They drink the beer and send a small pot out to the representative of the Chief, who is among the dancers. Now the Tendaanas' procession emerges, again solemnly encircles the dancers, and files away. At a tree which marks the path to Tongo they stop, and marching round it in a circle, chant a song the burden of which is Mosur boot kuliga ("Mosur wants to go home"). Upon this signal the allusion of which is obvious to all, the dance breaks up, the ritual is over.

That finishes the Gingaun dance for a year. The next three days at 796
Tongo are given over to the gayest festivities of the season, the celebration of Daa. This is a New Year's festival, a fitting conclusion to the dancing season. Dressed in their best and gaudiest clothes, the whole of Tongo assembles at the Chief's compound on the day after the rites at Baari. From far and near, Tongo women who have married away return to their [574]
homes, many bearing gifts of special food from their husbands. The Chief's house throngs with his people and strangers. His elders bring him presents of guinea fowls and he, sitting in state, has a bullock slaughtered, part of which he shares amongst them. The Chief, it is true, gets the better part of this exchange of gifts, but good form is satisfied. The afternoon is devoted to light-hearted dancing in praise of the Chief.

The Gbizug Tendaana has also celebrated Daa, but very quietly. That 796
evening, however, Chief and Tendaana meet in ceremonial. The scene is 778
the dancing ground. This is a dedicated area which may not be cultivated.

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

For this was the site of the first Gbizug Tendaana's compound when he received Mosur; and it is here that the Gbizug Tendaana receives every newly elected Chief of Tongo. After his investiture the Chief must never set foot in it again.

Towards evening a brother of the Chief arrives at the dancing ground, wearing the red cap and the gown, the insignia of a chief, and followed by boys carrying pots of beer. He takes his seat on the flat rock on which every newly elected chief sits down to await the Gbizug Tendaana. For an hour or two he sits gravely there, receiving the humble greetings of the men of Tongo. He is Chief for the nonce. Then a messenger arrives to announce the Gbizug Tendaana. The latter, escorted by men of his lineage, arrives in the dark and greets the mock-chief. The beer is divided out among those present, and then the Tendaana retires a dozen paces. In a voice inaudible to the Namoos, he calls upon his ancestor, the first Tendaana, and asks for the blessings of a good harvest, wives, children, and happiness in the coming year. The mock-chief dismisses his people and takes the homeward path, followed at some distance by the Tendaana and his people. As soon as he arrives at the Chief's compound, he and every other person in the compound, including the Chief himself, hides behind closed doorways in the rooms. The Tendaana enters a silent and empty compound. He goes to the secret place where the sacrosanct Chieftainship fetish is kept, pours a libation to it, and asks blessings for the Chief and all the land. When he has finished he enters the Chief's room to offer him New Year greetings, and so departs. Thus is the Chief every year renewed by a symbolic drama reenacting his first installation.

Two more days of festivity remain, during which all Tongo celebrates the New Year. Great quantities of food are cooked; there is visiting and counter-visiting, especially by affinal and cognatic relatives, and every one congratulates his neighbor on having seen another year. But the major interest of Daa is the holocaust of sacrifices which accompanies it. Fowls, guinea fowls, dogs, sheep, goats are slaughtered by the dozen in sacrifice to ancestors and to medicine fetishes. The roots of the latter are renewed, and thus given a new lease of life. There is more dancing to celebrate this, and another visit of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief to invoke blessings for the coming year. When the moon ends a few days after, the Namoos have finally done with their Harvest and New Year festival. Before that the Chief may not eat of the new guinea corn, though commoners do.

Two points deserve notice in this series of ritual celebrations. First, they express clearly the ambivalent relationships between the Namoos and their neighbors, and the bridging function of the Gbizug Tendaana. It is as if they were joined in a mutual responsibility each for the other,

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

based upon a profound antagonism. Second, the rites evidently recreate and regenerate the religious, the magical, and the traditional bulwarks of the social life of the Namoos.

A week later the scene shifts to the Hill Tallis. On the first day of the following moon, Bɔɣaraam ŋmarig, the Tallis begin their harvest festival of the same name. Despite the difference of name, it is the Daa festival translated into the peculiar and esoteric ritual idiom of the Hill Tallis. Namoos and Tallis, as the exclusion of the former from the inner mysteries at Baari indicated, constitute two religious sects. The cult of the bɔɣar, after which the Hill Tallis name their festival, dominates the religion of all the Tallis, but is known to the Namoos only by hearsay. Its hypertrophied development among the Hill Tallis is indeed completely hidden from their own sect-brethren at Baari and Gbizug. A bɔɣar may be a grove of trees, a cave in the hillside, or a small natural enclosure made by trees and boulders. It is truly sacred, for it may be entered only for ritual purposes, and in the company of all the ritual officiants. A bɔɣar's communicants generally comprise a group of linked lineages or of several clans, each of which appoints one officiant. All the ritual of the bɔɣar cult is built up on the notion of sacrifice, and every officiant or his representative must be present at every sacrifice. It is an axiom that a quarrel or dispute between communicants must be healed at once, by rites of reconciliation at the bɔɣar. The bɔɣar is the pinnacle of their ancestor cult, for it is there that all the ancestors of the communicants reside. It has tremendous magical power, amoral, like all Tale magic, and therefore applicable both for beneficient and maleficent ends. Thus its potency as fertility magic is widely renowned, and it can be invoked to bring death and destruction upon an enemy, by its communicants.

This, and much more, I learnt with very great difficulty, only after I had been initiated. For many months my enquires were fruitless. The Namoos know the dates of Bɔɣaraam, and the dances. Of the rituals they had, despite centuries of intimate contact, absolutely no knowledge. Indeed they refuse to hear of it, for they regard the cults of the Tallis with fear and aversion. The Tallis, on the other hand, never ceased to warn me against betraying what I had seen to my Namoos friends. It is, for them, the sin against the Holy Ghost punishable by instantaneous death, inflicted by the bɔɣar. This, the most absolute cleavage between the Namoos and the Hill Tallis, depends upon the fact that the latter initiate their sons into their cult. Nothing corresponding to initiation exists among the Namoos or even Gbizug or Baari. The Bɔɣaraam ritual is at the same time communion, initiation, and offering of first fruits.

The various bɔɣar congregations commence the ritual of Bɔɣaraam on

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

796 successive days, starting from the first day of the moon. The order of entry is fixed by tradition, and claims to precedence in rank are based in part on this. But preliminary sacrifices, consultations of diviners, collection of the chickens and guinea fowls which will be required, and finally ritual preparation of beer, usher in the festival. From the "Moon of Waters" on, every head of a joint family must eat out of special vessels, lest his food or water be contaminated by the newly harvested guinea corn flour, ground beans, or ocra. None of these foods are prohibited to women and younger members of the family. The taboo depends not upon some notions of the magical danger of eating unconsecrated first fruits, but upon the relationship of the communicants to the bɔɣar, who has the prerogative of tasting them first.

796 881 I can not describe the esoteric rites of Bɔɣaraam in detail. The main events take place during one night and the next day. The initiand youths, selected simply by the fact that their fathers can afford the numerous fowls and guinea fowls and the beer necessary for the rites, are pounced upon at night, undressed, and segregated throughout the rites. The communicants wear skins, the ritual garb of the Tallis. Women and uninitiated boys are rigorously excluded from earshot. Each elder brings fowls, guinea fowls, guinea corn flour, and cooked ground beans, and sacrifices are made in great numbers both at the houses of the Tendaanas and inside the bɔɣar. The ancestors are called upon and the bɔɣar is invoked. "Your day has come round again. We are about to eat the new guinea corn. Hence we bring you this offering of guinea corn and beans and these, your bɔɣaraam chickens. Grant us untroubled sleeping. May our wives bear children, and may we sow early millet successfully and meet again next year." This is the theme of the sacrificial invocations. Every chicken thus slaughtered is observed with concentrated anxiety. It must come to rest on its back, else the doner has sinned in some way and must at once go to a diviner to discover how. For the initiands long life, success in marriage and in farming, and safety from enemies is begged. It is a very serious thing if an initiand's fowl is rejected by the ancestors; and all proceedings are suspended until the sin is traced and atonement made.

The ritual is sensationally dramatic, and entirely different in style and emphasis from Namoos ritual. There is a constant interweaving of the three motifs, of communion, initiation, and first fruit offerings. The tone fluctuates between intense and almost terrified ritual participation and casual conviviality, when the beer is being divided.

The bɔɣar is first entered mysteriously in pitch darkness; but the "high spot" is what might be called the administration of the sacrament to the

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

initiands next day. They have been treated throughout with veiled contumely, like infants and outcasts, seated on the bare ground, their backs to the ceremonial. When the sacrifices are over and the beer consumed, the initiands are brusquely dragged up, each in turn, to the altar of the bɔɣar. Kneeling before it, quivering with fear, his eyes blindfolded by the hands of one officiant, his hands clasping a chicken whose neck he saws off on a rough stone with the help of another officiant, he is made to swear repeatedly "If I tell anybody may I die." This then is the secret of the impregnability of the Tallis bɔɣar cult both to the Namoos and to the ethnologist.

Before they leave, the meat and flour of all the sacrifices are divided out according to strict rules of prerogative; the initiands being fed with a tiny piece of meat and flour dumpling each. The rôle of each participant kinship group is defined in terms of the officiant it elects, the contributions it makes to the sacrifices, and the share of meat, beer, and flour it receives. The natives stress this organizational balance more jealously than details of ritual; for it is the structural framework which preserves the ritual collaboration. Finally, all the communicants, including those newly initiated, are daubed on brows, arms, and knees with consecrated red mud, the concrete emblem of the beneficient magic they are carrying home.

Bɔɣaraam, like Daa, is the occasion when married daughters return home with gifts of food and guinea fowls from their husbands, and men who have migrated to distant parts try to return for the ceremonies. Dancing follows after the ritual day. But as each settlement dances by itself, the Bɔɣaraam dancing is neither so impressive nor so great a focus of social interest as Gingaun. This time the Namoos are onlookers, for they may not enter the Tallis dances.

The Bɔɣaraam festival of the Hill Tallis thus appears to be homologous with the Gingaun and Daa of the Namoos, and the Daa of Baari, in its calendrical reference and its functional context. For Chief, Tendaanas, and elders, the fathers of the community who bear the greatest burden of responsibility for its welfare, the ritual is the dominant theme. For those of lesser social responsibility, the dancing and festivity, the fellowship of jubilation, are of major value. For everybody, these are festivals of reunion in which family and wider agnatic connections, the unique fact for the individual of having been born into a certain family and clan, receive special emphasis.

But what must chiefly interest us, in this paper, is to observe how these festivals differentiate and bind the Namoos and the Tallis. On the one hand it seems as if each community consolidates itself socially and morally by the very act of repulsing its neighbor. Behind its stone wall of exclusiveness,

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

182 even to the date of its festival, each community celebrates its release from the hazards of the past year and especially of the food-growing season, and fortifies itself by magical and religious techniques for another year. Nothing could more strikingly demonstrate the factors of dichotomy and antagonism in the polarity which we saw previously to be fundamental to Tale political structure than the difference between the rites of the Hill Tallis and those of the Namoos. It is true that every Tale ceremonial activity expresses the exclusiveness of the group performing it; but in these festivals the expression of difference has a political validity because it is reciprocal. The difference is published in the dance and dramatized in esoteric ritual.

But Namoos and Tallis are culturally equivalent communities, dwelling in close juxtaposition, having intimate economic and social relationships with each other. This, it seems to me, sets a limit to the degree of antagonistic differentiation tolerable; and thus the other factor in the polarity of Tale society comes into existence—the equilibrium between the two communities. The very opposition, as it were, engenders dependence. This aspect of Namoos-Tallis relations comes out clearly in the ceremony at Baari, in the visits of the Baari Tendaana to the Chief, and in the ritual reenacting of the Chief's induction at Tongo. It is notable how these rituals vividly insulate each group from the other, while at the same time uniting them in common responsibility for the welfare of the country.

182 796 The same compulsion to coöperate in the magical safeguarding of the land and the people obtains between the Namoos and the Hill Tallis. It is expressed in the Golib festival, which unfortunately space does not permit me to describe fully. The purpose of this festival, which occurs in the last month of the dry season, is to ensure a successful sowing and harvesting of early millet and to call down the blessing of fertility in general. In it all the clans of the Hill Tallis collaborate ritually and unite to dance together. In their ritual collaboration the distribution of offices and sacred apparatus among the several clans is so remarkably equal that each one of them can claim with ostensibly full justification to be more important than [578] the others. It so happens that a bitter personal feud is at present raging between one of these officiants, on the one hand, and the Chief of Tongo and another of the Golib officiants, on the other. But none of them could escape his obligation to coöperate with his enemy in the appropriate ceremonial situations. Here, perhaps, is a clue to the problem of why ritual forms and religious situations should be the institutional media selected for the expression of the equilibrium in Tale society. They have a compulsive power which a pragmatic institution orientated to the demands of the objective world could never have.

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

Golib is a dangerous month, during which both Namoos and Tallis are subject to numerous taboos, mainly aimed at averting quarrels and strife at the dances and in everyday relations between the groups. It is forbidden to shed blood on the earth, lest supernatural death overtake one, to take a wife, to carry out the final ceremonies connected with delayed funeral rites, to wear cloth garments in any of the Hill Tallis settlements, and so forth. Marriages are the cause of most inter-group litigation, and funeral ceremonies represent social situations in which large numbers of people from different settlements congregate and often give rise to disputes. Throughout, the Namoos are spectators of the dancing and excluded from the ritual. But on two occasions they meet the Hill Tallis in ceremonial interaction. In the inaugural rites the Hill Tallis, led by their Tendaanas, march to all their sacred groves in succession blowing sacred whistles in honor of them. When they reach the sacred groves which lie in Tongo, every Namoo man, woman, and child hides indoors. A Namoo who sees these rites of the Hill Tallis risks the destruction of his entire home and family by the outraged sacred groves. Once again, therefore, are the Namoos and Tallis mutually insulated or segregated by the symbolism of unchallengable ritual, the living affirmation of tradition. But there is a ritual reintegration of the groups. The final rite of Golib requires the coöperation of the Chief of Tongo. Again led by their Tendaanas, the Hill Tallis come down to the Chief's house to dance; and there Tendaanas and Chief join together to beg for blessings upon the land, for the safety of the people and the abundance of crops.

To revert to the harvest festivals, the magical and religious value of the ceremonial to the group performing it must not blind us to its socially integrative functions. The former is mainly determined by the seasonal context of the festivals and is evidenced preeminently in commonplace techniques, such as the sacrifice. The latter, which is determined primarily by the context of the social structure, is evidenced in the ceremonies peculiar to the occasion. These differ completely in content, as between Namoos and Tallis, a fact which the natives would explain by citing the historically different origins of the two groups. This suggests the principle common to all the integrative ceremonies. It is the dramatization of the nodal, hence traditionally sanctioned, relationship in the social structure of each group —the Chieftainship at Tongo, the right of access to the bɔŋar among the Tallis. This fundamental bond is resuscitated in both the symbolical and the direct phases of the ceremonies. The Chief and the Gbizug or Baari Tendaana thus reimpose on each other those responsibilities which bind them to a common task; and, by the very same rites, the Chief and his

8:Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1936 FE11 Tallensi FE11

182
796

people redefine each the place of the other in a social system the essence of which is the Chieftainship. The Hill Tallis, again, reestablish the responsibility of each initiated man for the preservation of their traditional cult, by imposing it upon the next generation, and thus reaffirm the loyalty of each to the other, and of sons to fathers.

To sum up, social cohesion as I understand this concept, both within and between the major communities which constitute Tale society, is no ultimate attribute of that society, but is achieved by specific social mechanisms such as those I have described. To me its most significant feature appears to be the fact that this integration is engendered as an equilibrium between opposed groups, over-riding, it seems, the tendencies to conflict inherent in the system. It is worth of note that this principle of a balance of powers is exploited also within each community to overcome the competitive autonomy of its constituent groupings.

Whether only a single general process is involved, accomodation to an immigrant group, is beyond my power to determine. One could presumably envisage the entire pattern of ritual and political values as a "reaction" to the "foreign body" represented by the Namoos clans. It seems not unlikely also that the equilibrium thus achieved is itself the barrier that prevents the diffusion of the esoteric rites of one community to the other.

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